

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BUENOS 08001 092255Z

22

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 CU-02 AID-05 MCT-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /067 W

----- 067013

R 092041Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8160

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 8001

3.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM SCUL PINT AR

SUBJECT: CATHOLIC CHURCH CONTINUES RESTRAINT IN FACE OF NEW GOA
PRESSURES

REF: BUENOS AIRES 7850

1. SUMMARY: GOA EFFORT TO PURGE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF ALLEGED
SUBVERSIVE ELEMENTS AND LEFTIST IDEOLOGICAL INDOCTRINATION OF
STUDENTS HAS BEGUN TO EXTEND INTO THE PRIVATE SCHOOLS RUN BY THE
CATHOLIC CHURCH. THE CHURCH HAS RESPONDED WITH THE THE PUBLIC
RESTRAINT CHARACTERISTIC OF ITS RELATIONS WITH THE MILITARY
GOVERNMENT SINCE THE COUP OF MARCH 1976,BUT GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE
IN THE SCHOOLS WILL ADD TO THE TENSIONS ALREADY EXISTING
AS THE RESULT OF ACTIONS OF THE SECURITY FORCES AGAINST SUSPECT
INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE CLERGY. END SUMMARY.

2. REFTEL (PARA 1) REPORTED MASSIVE POLICE RAID ON PRIVATE
CATHOLIC SCHOOL IN BUENOS AIRES ON NOV. 29. INTERVENTION WAS
APPARENTLY BASED MORE ON SCHOOL TENSIONS WITH SOME PARENTS AND
ALLEGATIONS OF IDEOLOGICAL INDOCTRINATION THAN ON ACTUAL EVI-
DENCE OF LINKS WITH GUERRILLAS, ET.GOA WAS SLOW TO MAKE ANY
PUBLIC STATEMENT JUSTIFYING ITS ACTIONS, BUT OBVIOUSLY INSPIRED
ARTICLES IN SOME NEWSPAPERS POINTED UP DANGERS OF SUBVERSIVE
INFLUENCES IN EVEN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS, AND DREW A DARK
PICTURE OF LEFTIST ELEMENTS AMONG THE CLERGY, FORMER CLERGY AND
RADICAL YOUTH TEACHING AT SOME OF THE SCHOOLS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BUENOS 08001 092255Z

3. NOT UNTIL DEC. 6, SEVEN DAYS AFTER SPECTACULAR RAID, DID RE-

SPONSIBLE GOA AUTHORITY, FIRST CORPS, ISSUE STATMENT ON INCIDENT. IT CONFIRMED THAT FOUR PRIESTS, ALL APPARENTLY ARGENTINE NATIONALS, ARE OFFICIALLY DETAINED. RAID WAS JUSTIFIED ON GROUND THAT INVESTIGATIONS HAD PRODUCED EVIDENCE "OF INTERNATL ANORMALITIES REFERRING TO ACTIVITIES OF SUBCERSIVE CONNOTATION." ANNOUNCEMENT CLAIMED THAT CHURCH AND MINISTRY OF EDUCATION HAD BEEN DULY ALERTED, AND TO "CLEAR UP THE SITUATION"THE SAN MIGUEL COLLEGE HAD BEEN RAIDED AND THE PRIESTS DETAINED. THE COMMAND WILL PROVIDE EVIDENCE TO CHURCH SO LATTER MAY COOPERATE IN FINDING SOLUTION WHICH WILL ERADICATE ALL SUSPICION OF "SUBVERSIVE TACHING" IN THE SCHOOL, "GUARANTEE STRICT APPLICATION OF OFFICIAL NORMS OF TEACHING," AND "RE-ESTABLISH NECESSARY HARMONY FOR THE COEXISTENCE OF PUPILS, PARENTS AND TEACHERS."

4. IN MEANTIME, PERMANENT COMMISSION OF CATHOLIC EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS HAD MET, AND DEC. 3 ISSUED OWN STATEMENT ON SAN MIGUEL INTERVENTION. COMMISSION, WHICH IS CHAIRED BY CARDIANL PRIMATESTA, EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN OVER ATTACKS ON TEACHING IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WHICH HAVE APPEARED IN THE PRESS, AND REMINDED READERS OF ENORMOUS GOOD WORKS OF OVER TWO THOUSAND CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN ARGENTINA. CHURCH WILL NOT HESITATE TO TAKE MEASURES TO CORRECT SITUATION IF ANY OF THEM "ACTIVITIES OR ORIENTATIONS ARE PROVED WHICH AFFECT CHURCH DOCTRINE OR FUNDAMENTAL INTERESTS OF STATE". UNTIL SUCH PROOFS ARE OFFERED, HOWEVER, CHURCH CALLED ON PUBLIC OPINION NOT TO REACH HASTY CONCLUSIONS, AND TO WAIT FOR FINDINGS OF CHURCH OR APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES.

5. IN REFERENCE TO SUSPENSIONS BY EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES OF CERTAIN TEACHERS IN ITS SCHOOLS, CHURCH ANNOUNCED THAT COMMISSION HAD APPOINTED SPECIAL GROUP TO INVESTIGATE, TO PROTECT AFFECTED RELIGIOUS, AND TO MAKE KNOWN TO HIGHEST AUTHORITIES THE LIVELY CONCERN WHICH SUCH OFFICIAL ACTIONS CAUSE TO THE COMMISSION. (GOA EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES SUSPENDE FROM TEACHING ACTIVITIES TWO NUNS, ONE THE DIRECTOR, OF SANTA UNION SCHOOL IN BUENOS AIRES.)

6. COMMENT: IT APPEARS REASONABLY CLEAR THAT RAID ON SCHOOL, WHICH WAS MORE APPROPRIATE TO MILITARY OPERATION DESIGNED TO ROOT OUT ARMED TERRORIST CELL, WAS NOT PROVOKED BY REAL EVIDENCE OF SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOL, SUCH AS SUPPORT FOR GUERRILLA
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUENOS 08001 092255Z

GROUPS. AS INDICATED IN GOA'S OWN ANNOUNCED, ALLEGED CONTENT OF TEACHING AND COMPLAINTS OF SOME PARENTS WERE BASIC CAUSES OF INTERVENTION.

7. WE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT GOA WOULD HAVE WAITED SEVEN DAYS AND THEN ISSUED WEAK STATMENT ON ARRESTS, IF IT HAD BEEN ABLE TO PRODUCE ANY SUBSTANTIAL EVIDENCE AT ALL OF SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES BY PREIESTS. TONE OF ATTACKS IN PRESS ON CATHOLIC

SCHOOLS, ATTRIBUTED TO ANONYMOUS SOURCES, INDICATES EVEN MORE CLEARLY THE BIAS AMONG SOME CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS OF GOA, EDUCATION MINISTRY, AND MILITARY AGAINST WHAT THEY VIEW AS DANGEROUS IDEOLOGICAL INDOCTRINATION OF STUDENTS EVEN AT PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS OF EDUCATION, AND THEIR WILLINGNESS TO USE SECURITY FORCES TO TRY TO ROOT IT OUT.

8. BOX COX OF BA HERALD TELLS US PROBLEM AT SCHOOL REALLY CENTERED AROUND CONFLICT BETWEEN OLDER AND YOUNGER PRIESTS THERE. LATTER WERE ATTEMPTING TO REFORM AND MODERNIZE CURRICULUM WHILE FORMER WERE STOUTLY RESISTING ANY INNOVATIONS. OLDER PRIESTS, IN TRYING TO LINE UP PARENTS ON THEIR SIDE, HAD TOLD THEM YOUNGER PRIESTS WERE "COMMUNISTS." SOME OF THE PARENTS THEN CALLED IN THE AUTHORITIES. COX DESCRIBED CHARGES AS "ABSOLUTE NONSENSE."
HILL

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CHURCH STATE RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BUENOS08001
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760456-0216
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761256/aaaabvud.tel
Line Count: 131
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BUENOS AIRES 7850
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <09 SEP 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CATHOLIC CHURCH CONTINUES RESTRAINT IN FACE OF NEW GOA PRESSURES
TAGS: SHUM, SCUL, PINT, SEDU, AR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006